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Plascencia et al.

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(54) **PORTABLE COMPACT PILLOW SYSTEM**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47G 9/10 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **5/639**; 5/640; 5/645; 5/657; 5/490

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 5/636, 639, 5/640, 645, 653, 657, 490, 491
See application file for complete search history.

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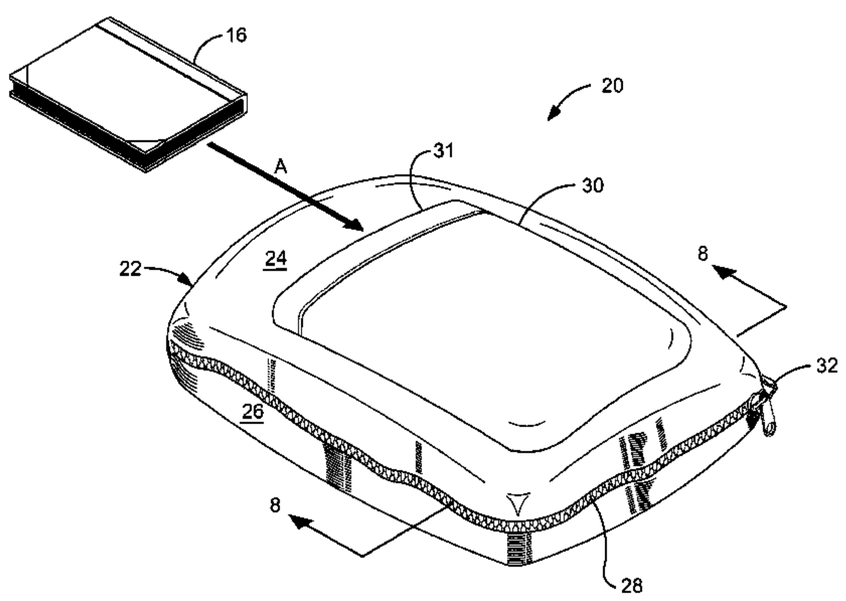
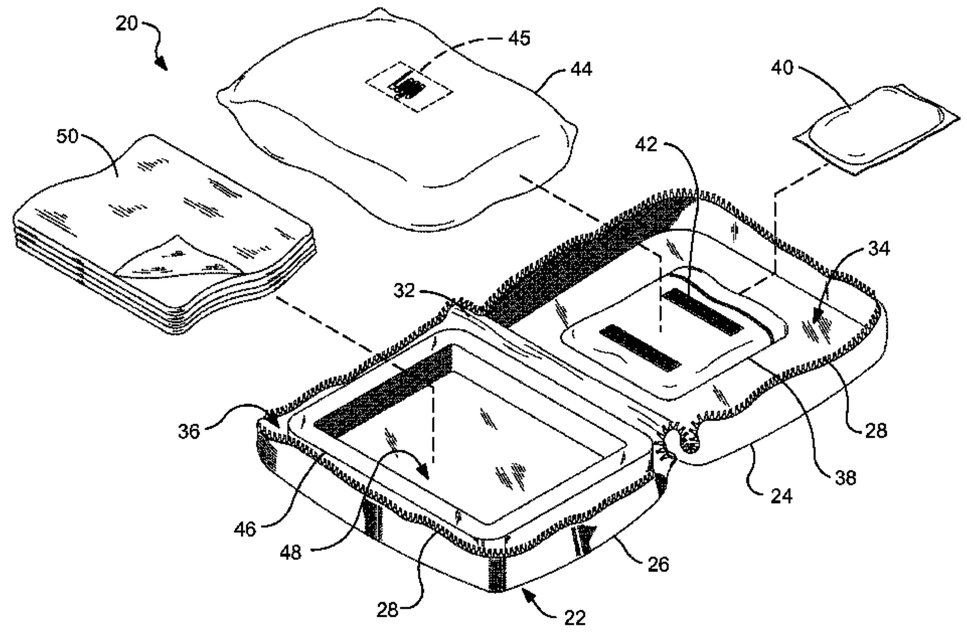
Primary Examiner — Michael Trettel

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A portable compact pillow system includes a travel carrier having a first half and a second half and also including a latching feature to secure the first half to the second half in a manner defining a hollow interior. A pillow is removably secured in a portion of the hollow interior defined by the first half, and a resilient member is secured in a portion of the hollow interior defined by the second half. The first half and the second half are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge such that the first half is separable from the second half and is pivotal about the hinge for substantially three-hundred-sixty degrees. The first half in its pivoted position is securable to the second half with the latching feature.

20 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets





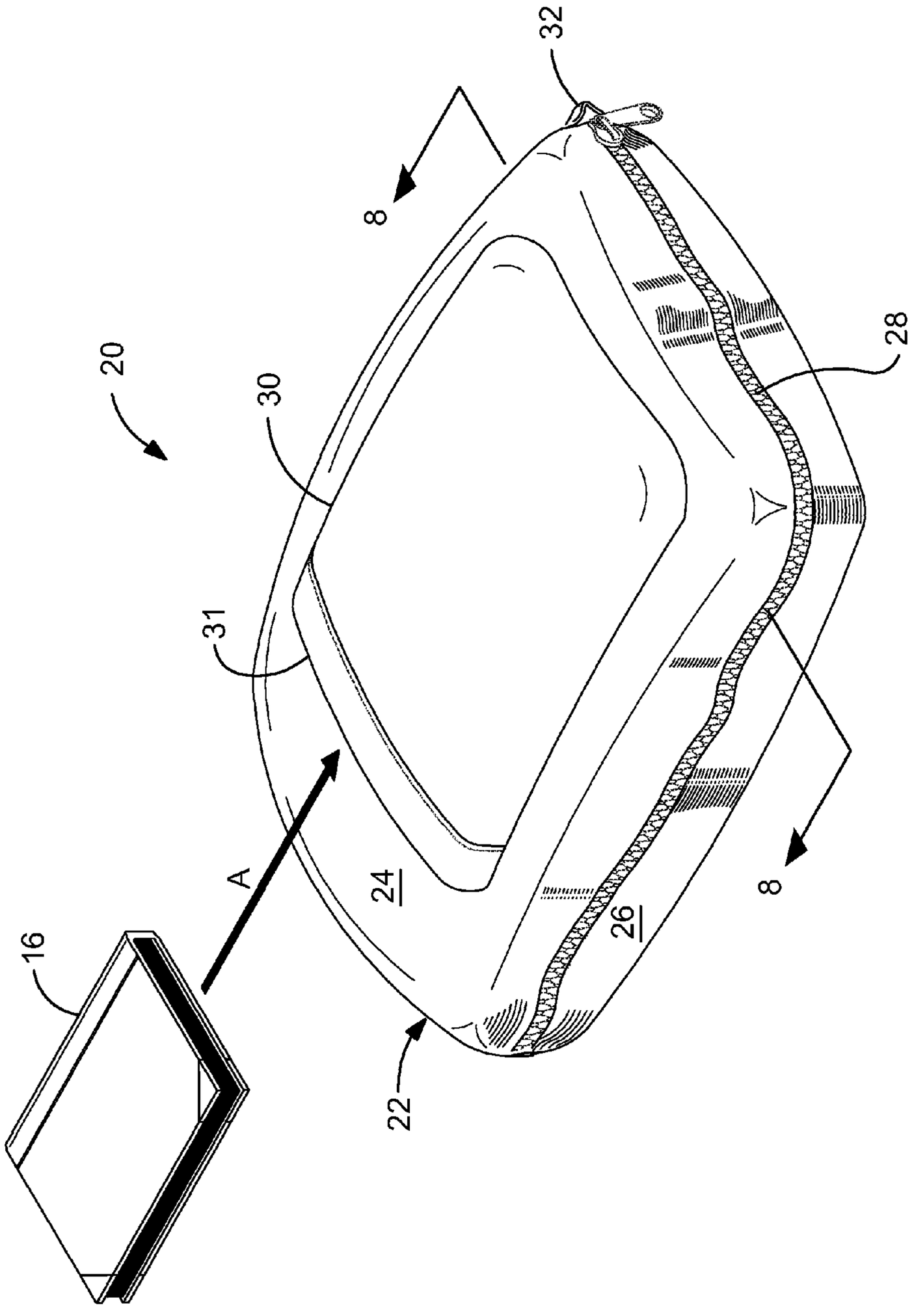


FIG. 1

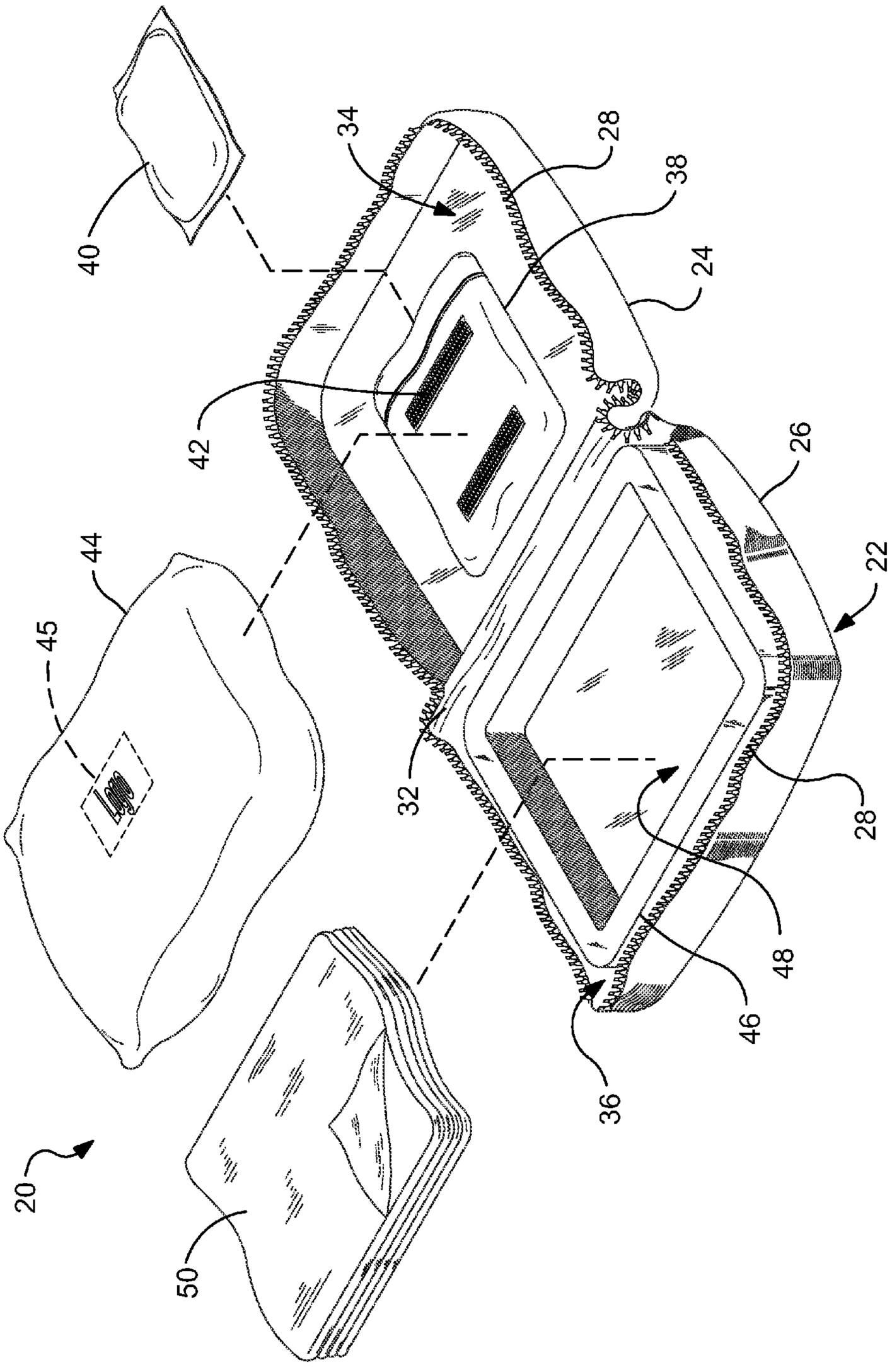


FIG. 2

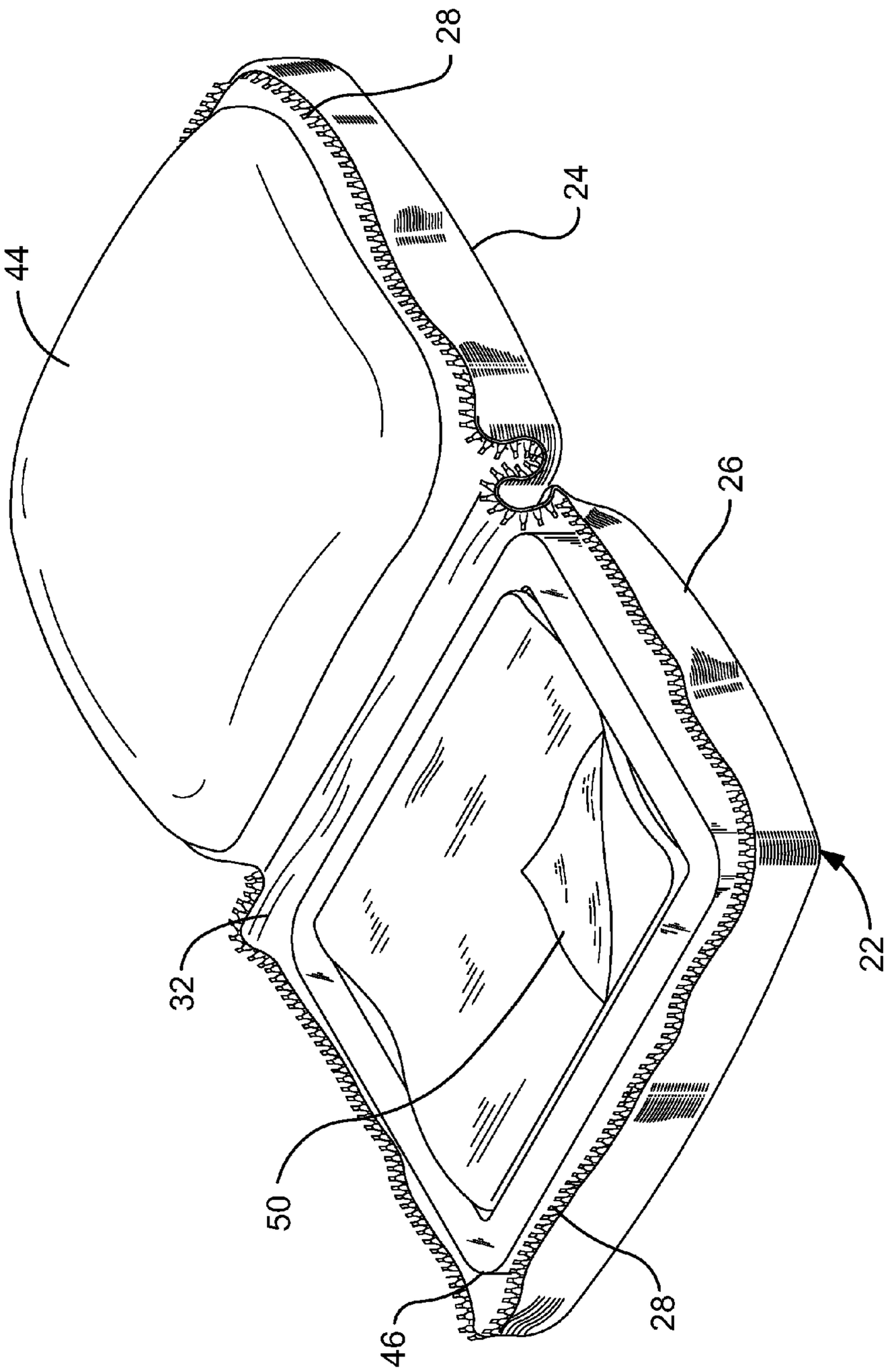


FIG. 3

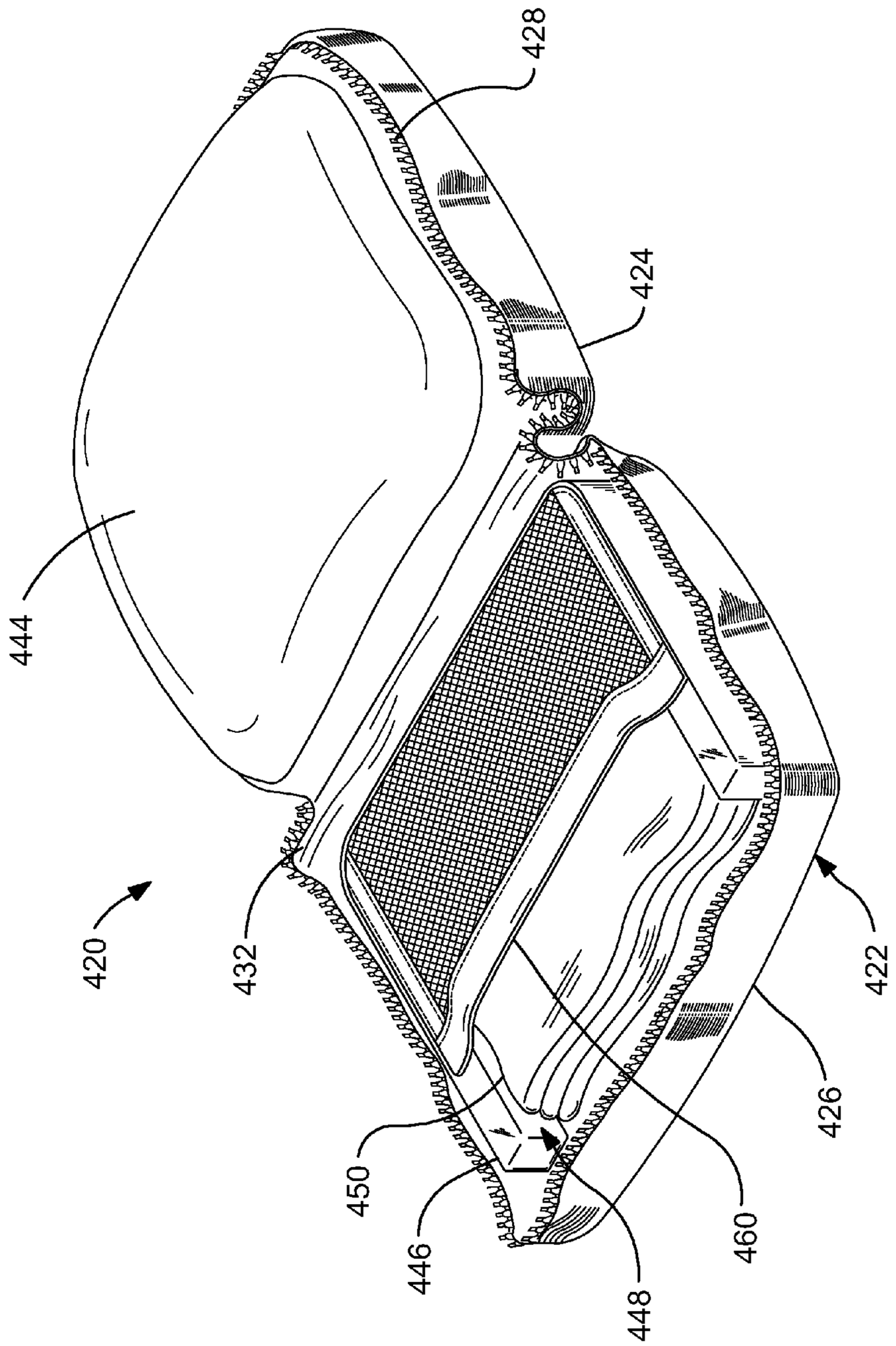


FIG. 4

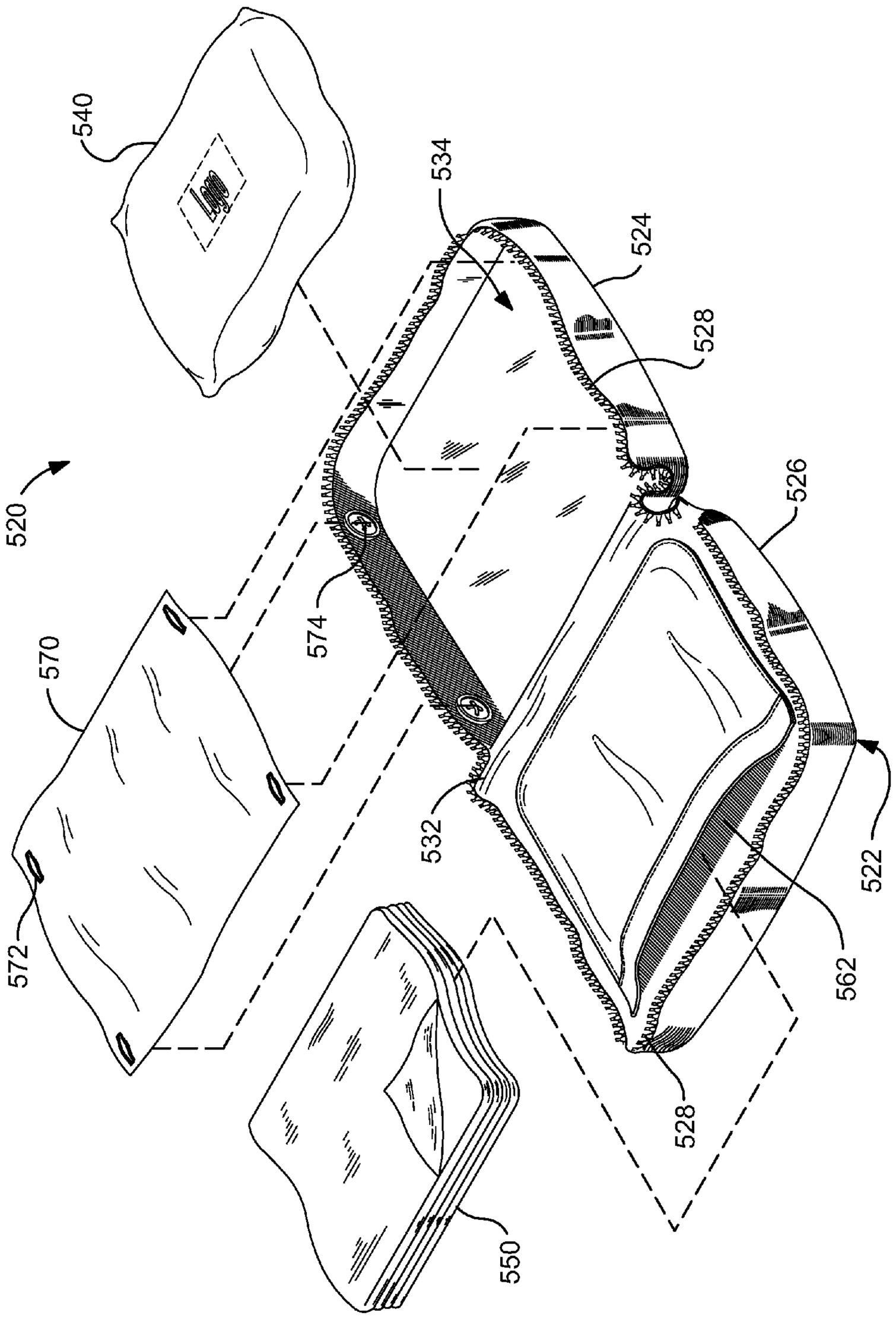


FIG. 5

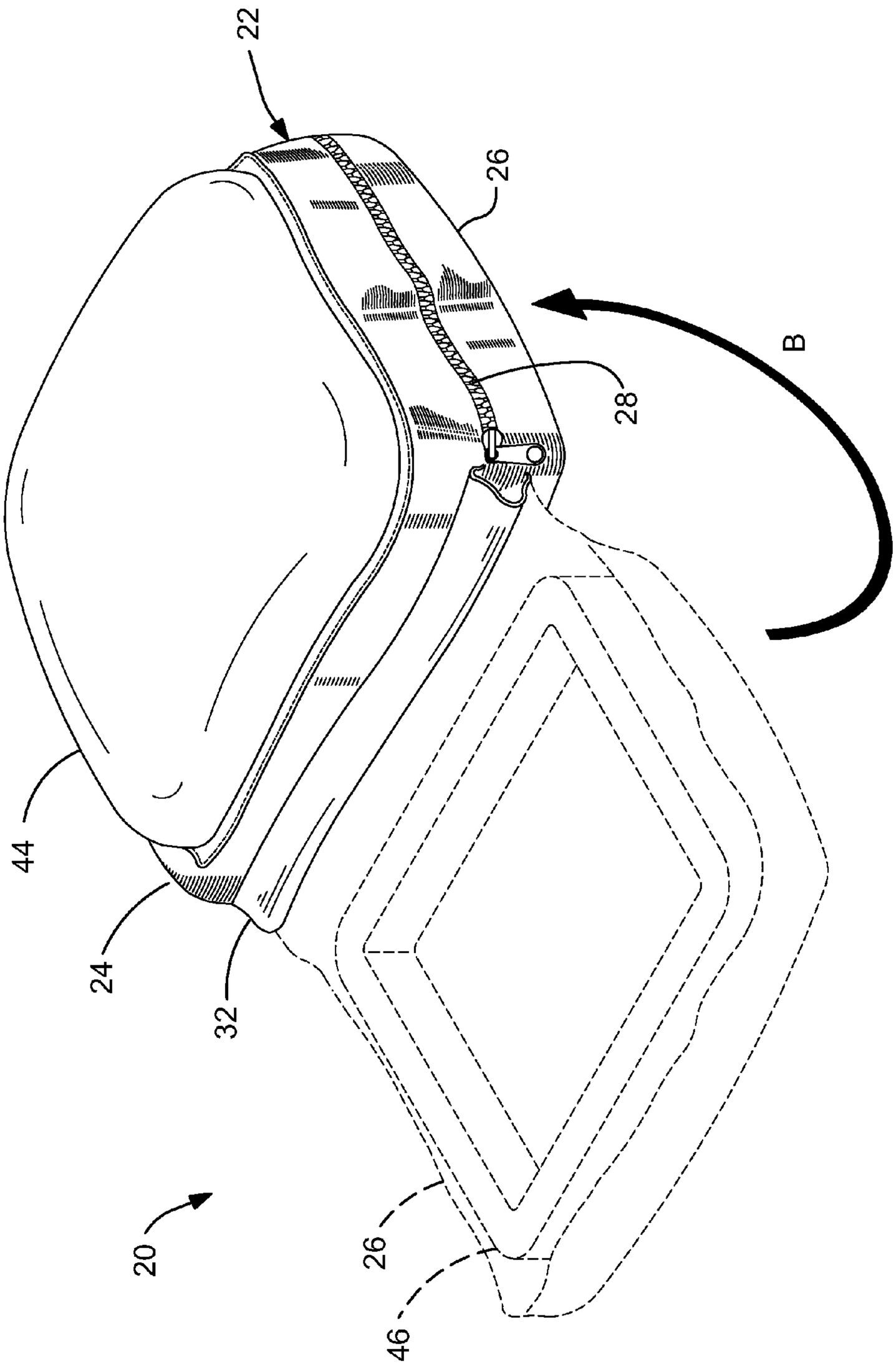


FIG. 6

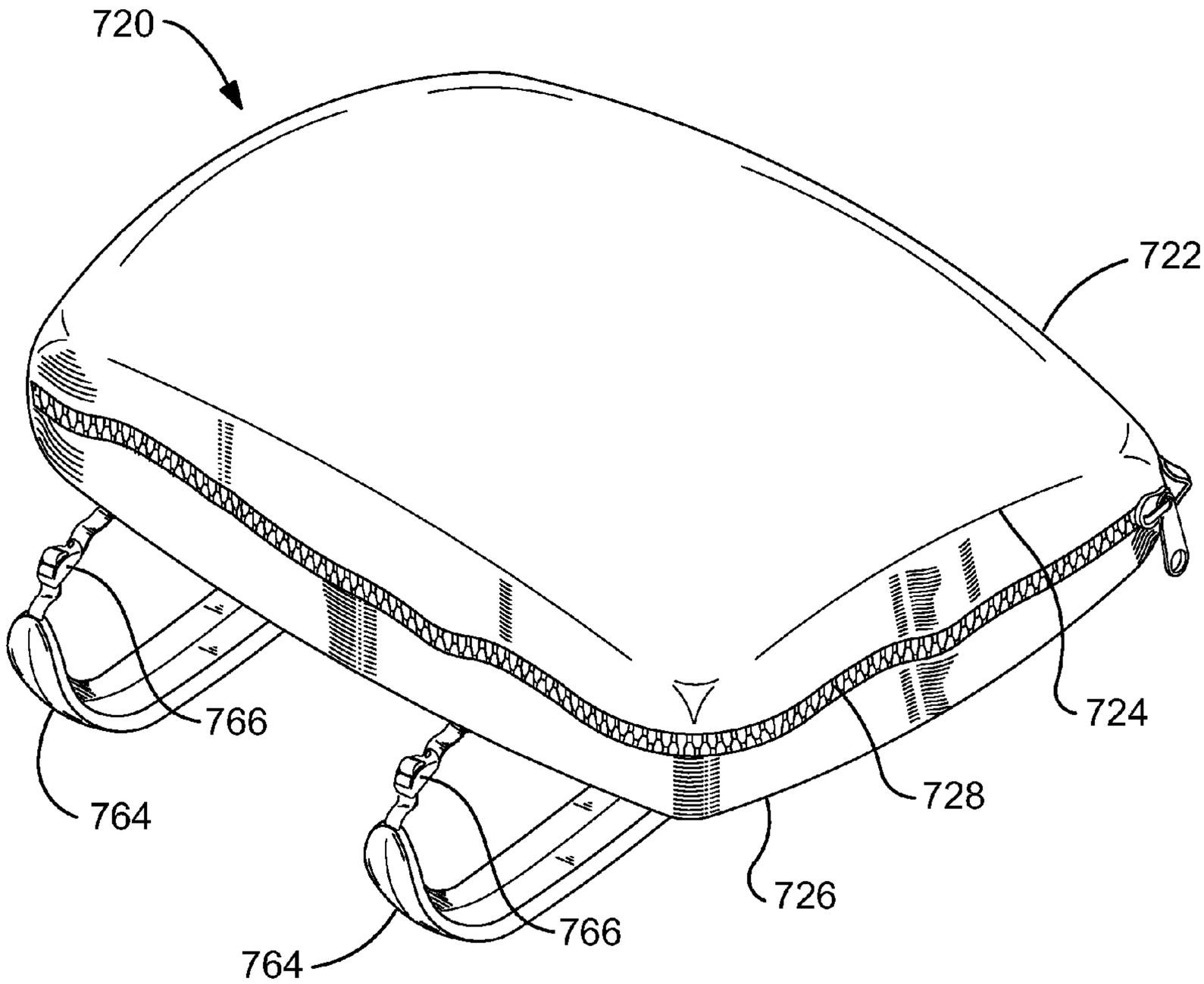


FIG. 7

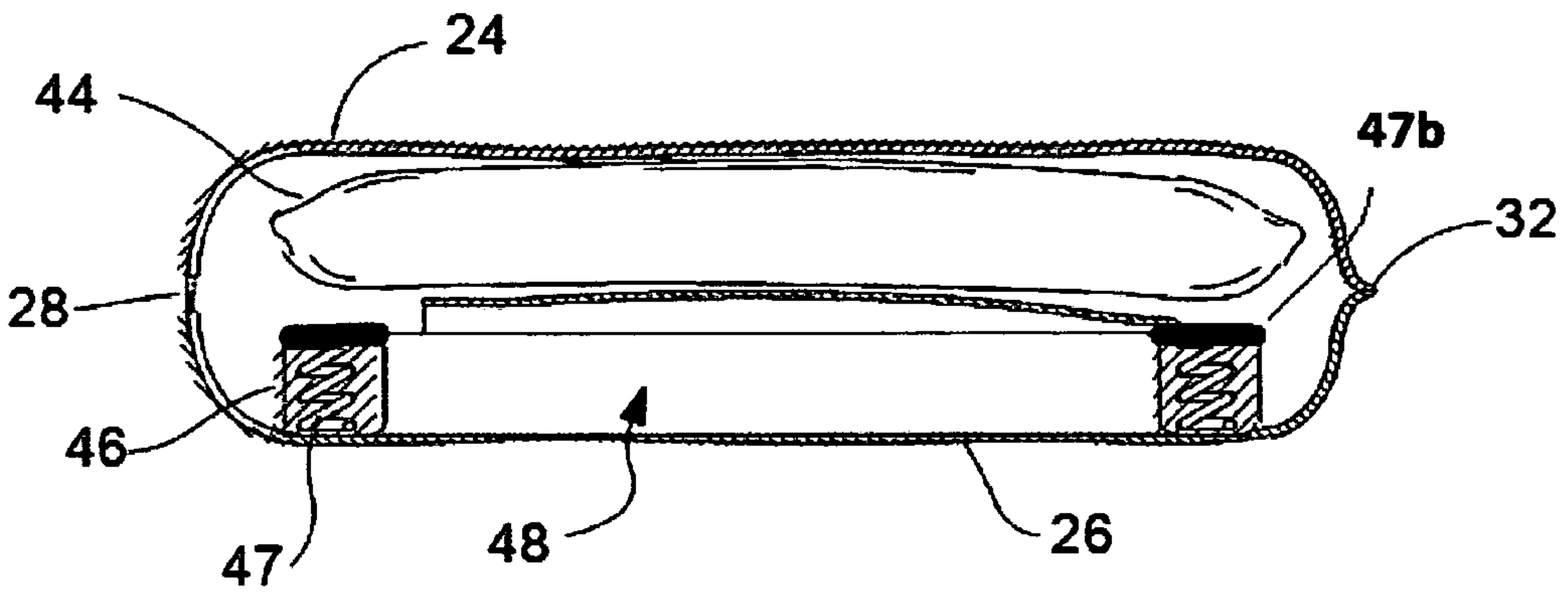


FIG. 8

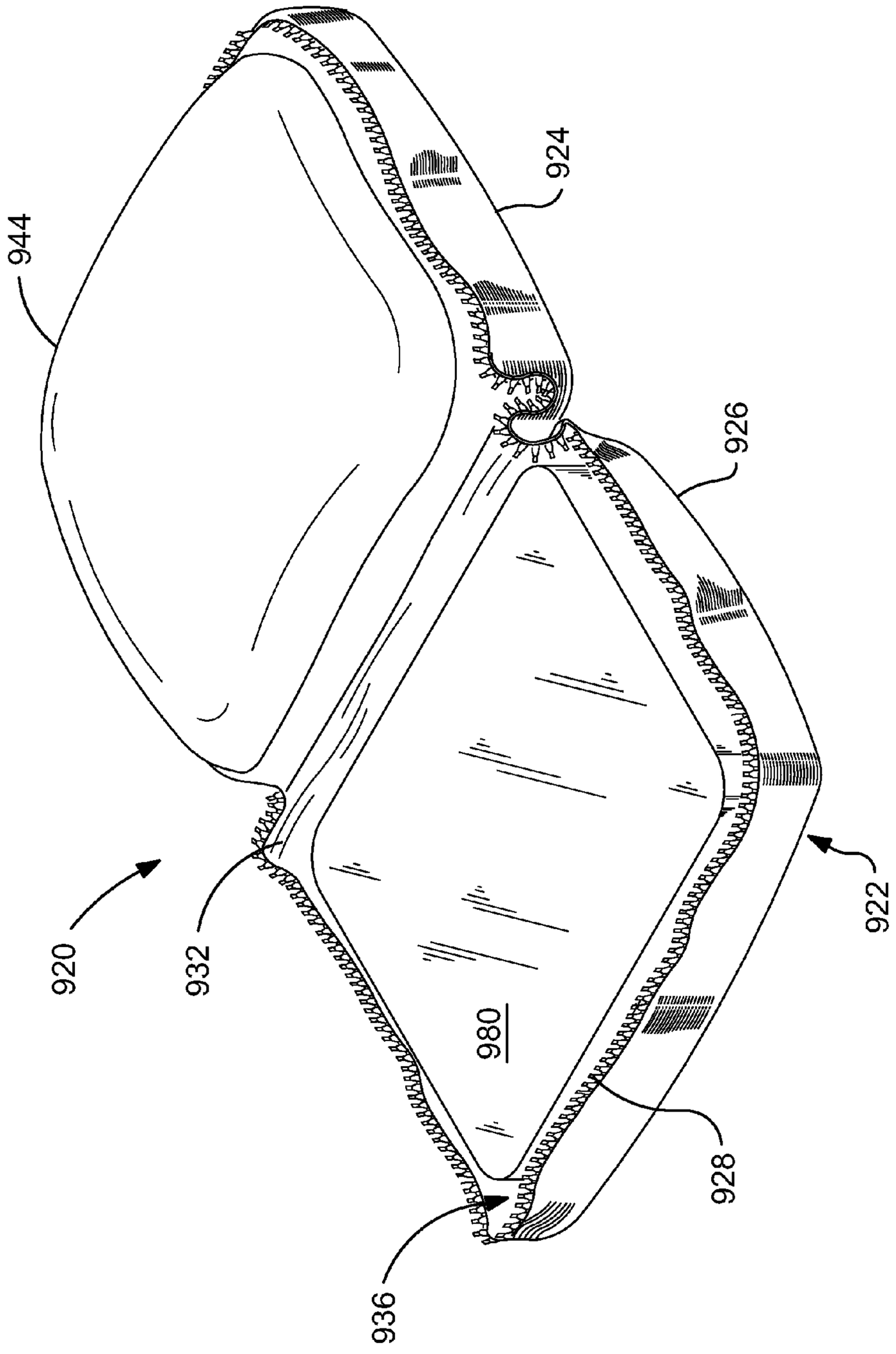


FIG. 9

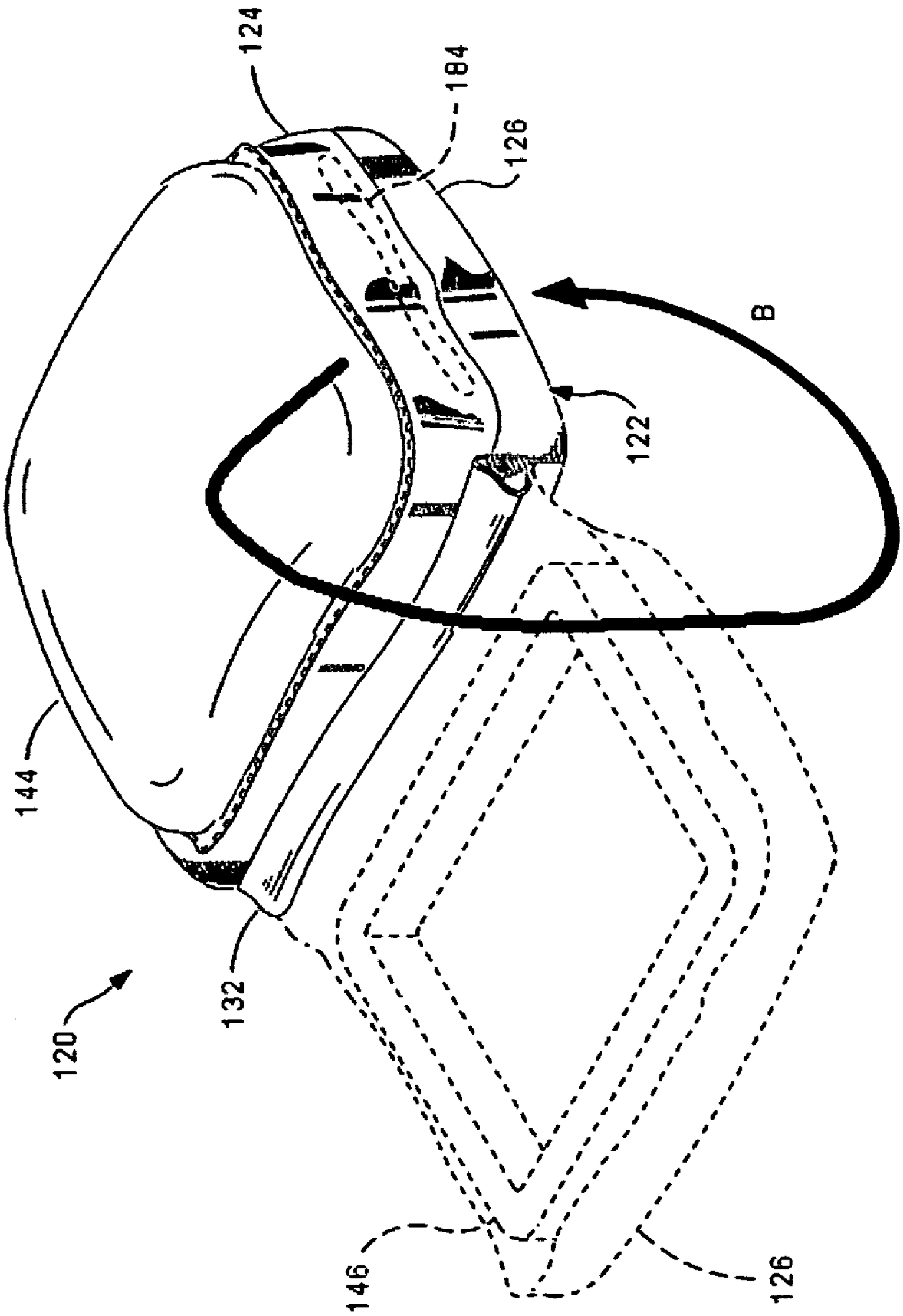


FIG 10

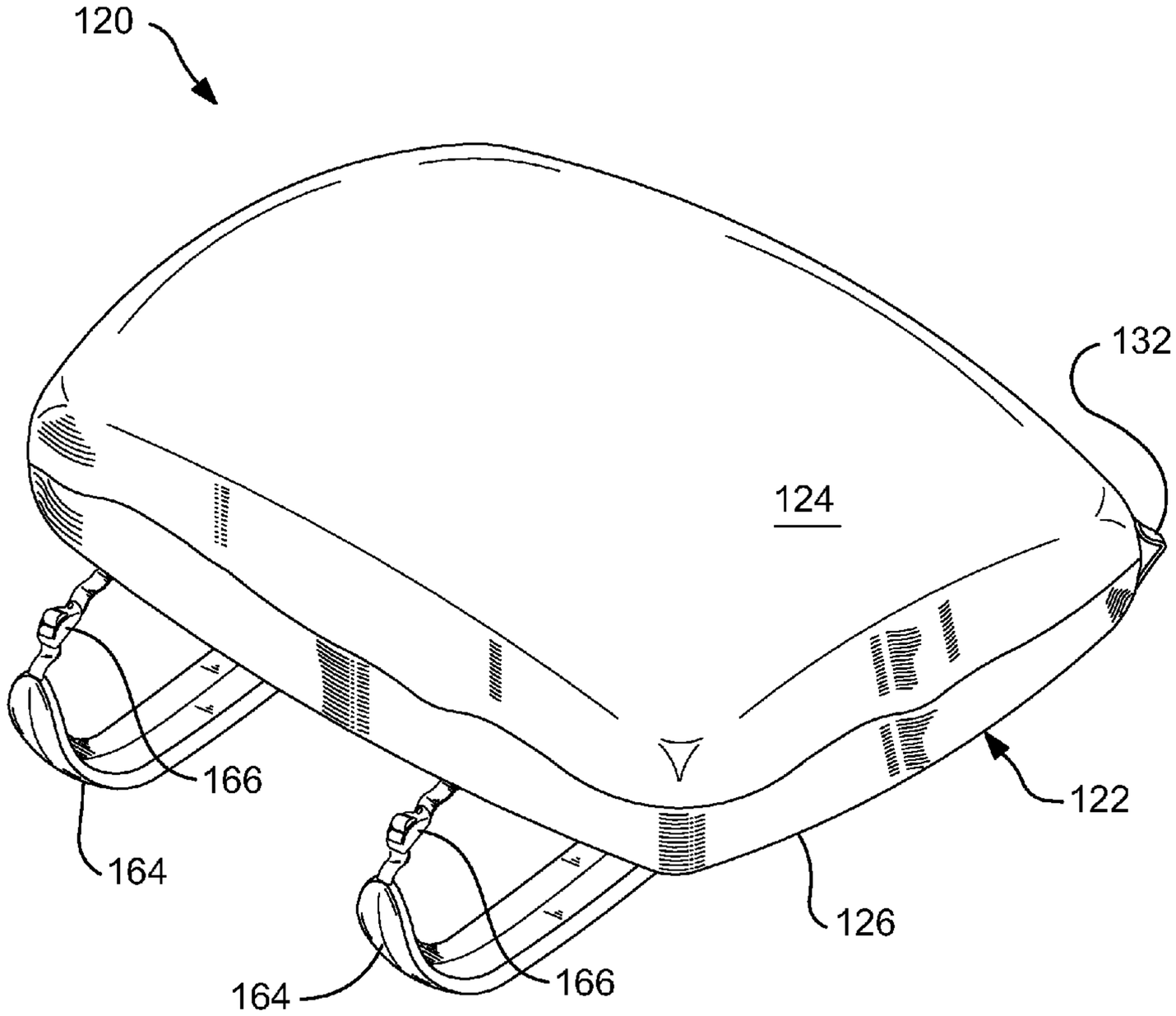


FIG. 11

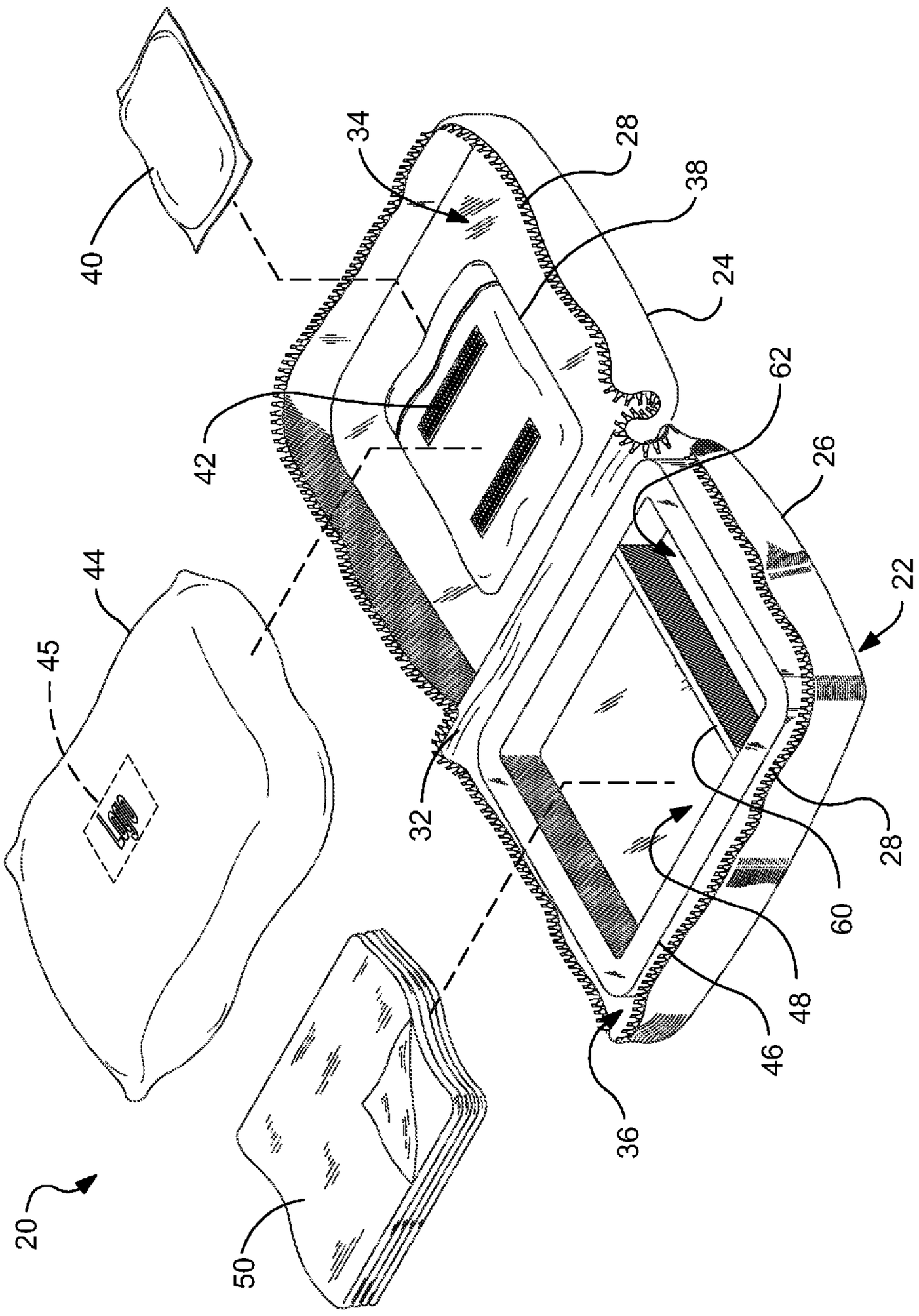


FIG. 12

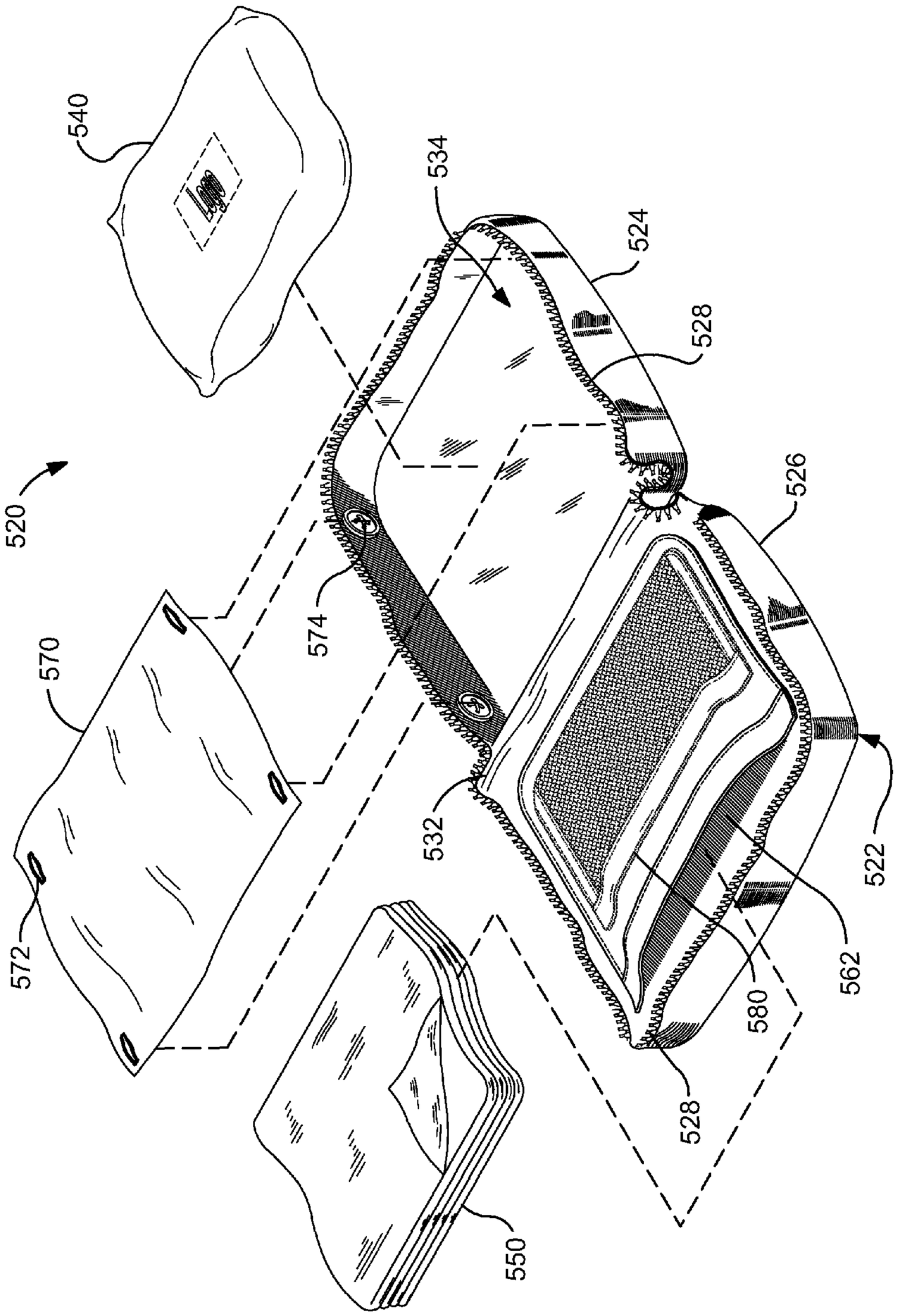


FIG. 13

PORTABLE COMPACT PILLOW SYSTEM

RELATED U.S. APPLICATION DATA

This Non-Provisional patent application claims priority to Provisional Patent Application 61/142,203 filed Jan. 1, 2009 and is incorporated in its entirety herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to pillows in general and more particularly to a portable compact pillow system having storage compartments.

2. Discussion of the Related Art

A pillow is a large cushion support for the head, usually used while sleeping in a bed, or for the body as used on a couch or chair. Internally, a pillow comprises a filler made from foam, synthetic fills, feathers, or down to provide a resilient 'loft' to the pillow. The fill is surrounded with a cover or shell made of cloth, known as the pillow case or pillow slip. There are three main types of pillows; standard well-known rectangular bed pillows, orthopedic pillows having a shape and filler designed to relieve skeletal stress and decorative pillows, with some overlapping of use between these. A pillow is designed to provide support and comfort to the body, primarily support for the user's head and neck while sleeping.

Some pillows are specifically designated as travel pillows. These pillows are generally smaller in size than a normal pillow and can have different shapes also. One popular pillow is formed in a horseshoe shape to be placed around the user's neck and is particularly adapted for use in situations where the user is sitting upright or semi-reclined. While these pillows may be of a convenient size for traveling, they are typically sold as just the pillow with no accessories. The user must acquire a pillowcase to fit the pillow and then find a means to conveniently carry the pillow during their travels. If the user wishes to carry other items for use with the pillow, such as a blanket, etc. the user must also find a carrier in which both items fit and which is convenient to carry and Protect the items inside.

When traveling on common carriers, having the carrier supply pillows and blankets for sleeping is becoming less common. Thus, people must supply their own amenities to aid in sleep while traveling or do without. Therefore what is desired is a portable compact pillow system that is rugged and easy to transport, can carry items in addition to a pillow to help make the user comfortable when sleeping, and is protective of the system components.

When inverted 360 degrees, this novelty design provides a bed-like system where the pillow, backing and coils serve as a mattress, box and springs, respectively for increased compressive/supportive comfort vs. use of a standard pillow.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to a portable compact pillow system that satisfies the need for a rugged and easily transportable pillow system. The portable compact pillow system includes a travel carrier having a first half and a second half and also including a latching feature to secure the first half to the second half in a manner defining a hollow interior. A pillow is removably secured in a portion of the hollow interior defined by the first half, and a resilient member is secured in a portion of the hollow interior defined by the second half. The first half and the second half are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge that the first half is separable from the second half and is pivotal about the hinge for substantially three-hundred-sixty degree rotation in reversed position. The first half is securable to the second half with the latching feature.

In a first aspect of the present invention, the latching feature is a zipper.

In another aspect, the latching feature is a dense hook and loop tape.

In yet another aspect, the present invention includes a resilient member provided about an interior periphery of the second half. The resilient member is sized and shaped to receive a folded blanket. The resilient member is of a sufficiently rigid material to support a person sitting upon the pillow when the blanket is removed therefrom. A panel can be provided at least partially covering the resilient member for aiding in maintaining the blanket in stored position.

In yet another aspect, the portable compact pillow system can further comprise a pair of back-pack straps.

In yet another aspect, the pillow can be removably secured via a dense hook and loop interface, a button and buttonhole interface, a hook and eye interface, an elastic and anchor interface, and the like.

In yet another aspect, a storage pouch can be provided upon an exterior of the pillow system, between the stored pillow and the first half, within a portion of the recess provided by the resilient member, upon a panel provided upon the resilient member, and the like.

These and other features, aspects, and advantages of the invention will be further understood and appreciated by those skilled in the art by reference to the following written specification, claims and appended drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a fuller understanding of the nature of the present invention, reference should be made to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a pillow system embodying the present invention, wherein an exterior includes a pouch for securing a planning book;

FIG. **2** is an exploded view of the pillow system in of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is an assembled perspective view of the pillow system of FIG. **2**;

FIG. **4** is an alternate embodiment of the pillow system of FIG. **3** illustrating a mesh internal storage pocket;

FIG. **5** is an exploded view of an alternate embodiment pillow system illustrating an alternate cover for retaining a removable pillow;

FIG. **6** is a perspective view of an alternate case embodiment showing the case zipped in a reversed configuration;

FIG. **7** is an alternate embodiment of the case of the pillow system including back pack straps;

FIG. **8** is a cross-sectional view of the pillow system shown in FIG. **1** and taken along the line **8**-**8**, FIG. **1**;

FIG. **9** is a perspective view of the interior of an alternate embodiment of the pillow system with no provisions for blanket storage;

FIG. **10** is a perspective view of a reversible case for the pillow system with no zipper; and

FIG. **11** is a perspective view of a case for the pillow system without a zipper and including back-pack straps;

FIG. **12** is an exploded view of the pillow system of FIG. **1**, further introducing an optional personal object storage cavity; and

FIG. **13** is an exploded view of the alternate embodiment pillow system of FIG. **5**, further introducing an optional personal object storage pocket.

Like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

For purposes of description herein, the terms "upper", "lower", "left", "rear", "right", "front", "vertical", "horizontal", and derivatives thereof shall relate to the invention as oriented in FIG. **2**. However, one will understand that the invention may assume various alternative orientations and step sequences, except where expressly specified to the contrary. Therefore, the specific devices and processes illustrated in the attached drawings, and described in the following specification, are simply exemplary embodiments of the inventive concepts defined in the appended claims. Hence, specific dimensions and other physical characteristics relating to the embodiments disclosed herein are not to be considered as limiting, unless the claims expressly state otherwise.

Turning to the drawings, FIG. **1** shows a portable compact pillow system **20**, which is one of the preferred embodiments of the present invention and illustrates its various components. Pillow system **20** generally comprises a travel carrier **22** having a first half **24** and a second half **26** which are interconnected with a latching system such as zipper **28**. First half **24** and second half **26** are connected one to the other with hinge **32** for pivotal movement one with respect to the other. Travel carrier **22** can have an external pouch **30** fastened thereto for removably securing items such as a planner **16**. Planner **16** can be inserted in pouch **30** by sliding planner **16** along arrow "A" into an open end **31** of external pouch **30** for convenient access to the user of pillow system **20**.

Turning to FIGS. **2-3** and **8**, pillow system **20** is shown in an opened configuration. Pillow system can be opened by releasing latching mechanism **28** and pivoting first half **24** and second half **26** apart one from the other about hinge **32**. First half **24** defines an interior **34** which is sized to receive a pillow **44** therein. Interior **34** can be of a thickness such that pillow **44** is compressed to reduce its loft while stored to provide a more compact pillow system **20**. Pillow **44** can include an emblem or logo **45** on a surface thereof such as for a college athletic team or a professional athletic team to customize pillow system **20** for sales to fans. Pillow **44** is further secured to first half **24** by a fastening system **42** such as a hook and loop fastener well known in the industry wherein one of the hook and loop elements (not shown) is attached to pillow **44** and a mating element (shown) is attached to the interior of first half **24**. The pillow **44** can be fabricated having a casing of any soft material, such as cotton, velour, suede, silk, soft polyester, and the like, and any reasonable blend thereof. The pillow can be stuffed with any reasonably suited material, such as poly-fill, microbeads, down feathers, foam popcorn filling, a foam block, shredded foam, and the like, as well as any combination thereof. (While pillow **44** is described herein as being selectively removable, those practiced in the art will recognized that pillow **44** can be fixed within first half **24** and non-removable.) As illustrated, one portion of fastening element **42** is attached to an internal pocket **38**. Internal pocket **38** can receive therein a cooling or warming pack **40**. Pack **40** can be activated and placed in pocket **38** while pillow **44** is retained within travel carrier **22** and travel carrier **22** in an assembled form is used as a pillow. Pack **40**, proximate to the outer surface of first half **24**, provides a cooling or warming sensation to the user as the user rests his or her head on pillow system **20**. The first half **24** of pillow system **20** can be fabricated of any soft material, such as cotton, spandex, velour, suede, silk, soft polyester, and the like, and any reasonable blend thereof. The first half **24** of pillow system **20** can be padded having a thin cavity filled with any reasonably suited material, such as poly-fill or other fibrous filler, microbeads, down feathers, foam popcorn filling, a foam block, shredded foam, and the like, as well as any combination thereof.

Second half **26** defines an interior portion **36** which receives a resilient member **46** therein. Resilient member **46** as illustrated in FIGS. **2-3** and **8** defines a recess **48**, which, in turn, receives a blanket **50** therein (FIG. **3**). Resilient member **46** can be constructed of open or closed cell resilient foam and can have springs **47** embedded therein for additional resilient support. Blanket **50** can be readily removed from travel carrier **22** when carrier **22** is in an open configuration, and resilient member **46** functions to provide support to travel carrier **22** when blanket **50** is removed therefrom. The second half **26** can include a pocket for storing items such as keys, an MP3 player, a video player, a cell phone, and the like. The second half **26** can be apportioned using a portion to store the blanket **50** and the balance to store other material such as additional resilient member **46**.

The travel carrier **22** can be fabricated of a variety of materials, including woven fabric, man-made materials, leather, and the like. With considerations towards use in an outside environment, the travel carrier **22** can be fabricated of a weather resilient/waterproof material, seams, and releasing latching mechanism **28**.

Turning to FIG. **4**, an alternate embodiment pillow system **420** is illustrated wherein first and second halves **424** and **426** of a travel carrier **422** are selectively secured one to another with fastening system (zipper) **428**. First half **424** retains a pillow **444** therein and second half retains therein a blanket **450**. Blanket **450** is secured on three sides by resilient member **446** and further secured by mesh panel **460** extending over a portion of recess **448** defined by resilient member **446**. Resilient member **446** and mesh panel **460** in combination form a pocket for receiving blanket **450** therein.

FIG. **5** illustrates yet another alternate pillow system embodiment **520**. Travel carrier **522** incorporates a pocket retainer **562** for securing blanket **550** in second half **526**. First half **524** includes buttons **574** affixed to interior **534** thereof. A pillow retainer **570** includes buttonholes **572** corresponding to locations of buttons **574** for securing pillow retainer **570** to interior **534**. In use, the user places pillow **540** in interior **534** of first half **524**. Pillow retainer **570** is placed over pillow **540** and buttons **574** are received through button holes **572** thereby securing pillow **540** and pillow retainer **570** in interior **534** of first half **524**. First and second halves **524** and **526** can then be pivoted about hinge **532** and secured together with zipper **528**. It is understood that any disengaging mechanical fastener can be utilized for the buttonholes **572** and corresponding buttons **574**. Such disengaging mechanical fasteners can include snaps, hooks and loops, ribbons, frog closures, ribbon and eyelets, elastic and respective anchors, and the like.

Referring now to FIGS. **1** and **6**, pillow system **20** is illustrated (FIG. **6**) wherein travel carrier **22** is secured in an alternate fastened position other than the closed position illustrated in FIG. **1**. To obtain the alternate fastened position, travel carrier **22** is unzipped from its normal traveling configuration wherein second half **26** is above and in registration with first half **24** as illustrated in FIG. **1**. Second half **26** is pivoted about hinge **32** in a manner to be in registration with and below first half **24** (Arrow "B"). Zipper **28** is then mated

zipper half to mating zipper half and closed to again present a fastened travel carrier in an "inside-out" configuration. In this configuration, travel carrier **22** presents pillow **44** as externally exposed on the top of pillow system **20** and wherein pillow system **20** is supported from below by resilient member **46**. Hinge **32** is a fabric member extending substantially along a length of travel carrier **22** and is of sufficient width to accommodate the reversed configuration of travel carrier **22**.

FIG. **7** illustrates yet another pillow system embodiment **720** wherein travel carrier **722** includes a pair of back pack straps **764** fastened to an exterior of either first half **724** (not shown) or second half **726** (shown). Straps **764** facilitate easy carrying by the user and can also be used to secure pillow system **720** to a bench type seat when used as a seat cushion. Each of the pair of back-pack straps **764** can optionally comprise a length adjusting mechanism **766** to optimize the length of the strap **764** for the user's comfort.

FIG. **9** illustrates a pillow system embodiment **920** that does not include an internally retained blanket. Second half **926** defines an interior **936** that retains resilient member **980**. Resilient member **980** is constructed of resilient open or closed cell foam and can include a plurality of internal springs embedded within the foam (as illustrated in FIG. **8**). Resilient member **980** is of substantially constant thickness throughout and does not define a central recess into which a blanket can be received.

FIGS. **10** and **11** illustrate an alternate pillow system embodiment **120** wherein the latching feature is other than a zipper and can be a hook and loop fastener **184** or other friction type fastening measure. Such fastening measures eliminate the uncomfortable sensation of a mechanical mechanism such as a zipper from chafing against the user's skin. Fastener **184** is arranged in a manner that second half **126** can be pivoted substantially three-hundred-sixty degrees about hinge **132** to secure travel carrier **122** in an "inside-out" configuration. Again, in its "inside-out" configuration, pillow system **120** has pillow **144** exposed externally and is support therebelow by resilient member **146**. As further illustrated in FIG. **11**, pillow system **120** can have a pair of back-pack straps **164** affixed to an exterior to facilitate convenient carrying of pillow system **120**. Each of the pair of back-pack straps **164** can optionally comprise a length adjusting mechanism **166**.

In use, a user of pillow system **20** or one of the alternate embodiments illustrated herein transports pillow system **20** to the place the user desires to utilize system **20**. Pillow system can be used in multiple manners. Zipper **28** can be opened to allow extraction of pillow **44** and blanket **50** from travel carrier **22** for independent use. Travel carrier **22** can be reversed to be supported by resilient member **46** thereby allowing resting of the user's head against the comfortable cloth of pillow **44**. Pillow system can also be used as a pillow or as a seat cushion wherein pillow **44** is retained within travel carrier **22** and is oppositely supported by resilient member **46** retained in second half **26**. Resilient member **46** functions as a support whether blanket **50** remains secured in recess **48** or is removed for use to preserve bodily warmth. Thus, the user is provided a pillow system that is adaptable to multiple uses and is easily transported in a rugged carrier to prevent damage or soiling of the pillow and blanket retained internally.

FIGS. **12** and **13** illustrate optional object carrying pockets. The compact pillow system **20**, originally presented in FIG. **2**, is illustrated including an optional recess divider **60** provided within the interior of resilient member **46** in FIG. **12**. The optional recess divider **60** defines recess **48** and an object storing section **62**. The optional recess divider **60** is preferably of a semi-rigid or rigid material, such as foam. The optional recess divider **60** can be moveable or removably assembled to the resilient member **46**. A dense hook and loop fastener, a series of snaps, a series of slots, and the like can be utilized for the optional recess divider **60** to resilient member **46** interface. The alternate pillow system embodiment **520**, originally presented in FIG. **5**, is illustrated in FIG. **13** illustrating an optional interior object pocket **580** disposed upon the pocket retainer **562**. The optional interior object pocket **580** can be fabricated of a mesh, a soft material, a stretchy material (such as spandex), and the like. The optional interior object pocket **580** can additionally be padded such as with a foam or fibrous filler lining to protect sensitive objects such as phones, cameras, MP3 players, and the like.

The above description is considered that of the preferred embodiments only. Modifications of the invention will occur to those skilled in the art and to those who make or use the invention. Therefore, it is understood that the embodiments shown in the drawings and described above are merely for illustrative purposes and are not intended to limit the scope of the invention, which is defined by the following claims as interpreted according to the principles of patent law, including the doctrine of equivalents.

We claim:

1. A travel carrier having a first half and a second half, said first half and said second halves defining a hollow interior and are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge such that there is a pivot about said hinge for substantially three-hundred-sixty degrees, said first half in a pivoted reversed position securable to second half via a latching feature;

a pillow removably secured in a portion of said hollow interior by a disengaging mechanical fastener defined by said first half; and

a resilient member secured in a portion of said hollow interior defined by said second half.

2. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said resilient member defines a central recess and further including a blanket removably secured within said recess.

3. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **2**, said pillow system further comprising a pocket retainer at least partially covering said central recess, further securing said blanket therein.

4. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said latching feature is a zipper.

5. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said latching feature is a hook and loop fastener.

6. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said pillow is secured within said first half via a disengaging mechanical fastener.

7. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **6** wherein said disengaging mechanical fastener is selected from a group consisting of:

a. a hook and loop tape fastener,
b. buttons and respective buttonholes,
c. snaps,
d. hook and loops,
e. ribbons,
f. frog closures,
g. ribbon and eyelets,
h. elastic and respective anchors
i. zippers.

8. A travel carrier having a first half and a second half, said first half and said second halves defining a hollow interior and are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge such that there is a pivot about said hinge for substantially

three-hundred-sixty degrees, said first half in a pivoted reversed position securable to second half via said a latching feature;

a pillow removably secured in a portion of said hollow interior by a disengaging mechanical fastener defined by said first half; a resilient member secured in a portion of said hollow interior defined by said second half; and

a pair of back-pack straps affixed to an exterior of said travel carrier to facilitate convenient carrying of said travel carrier.

9. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **8** wherein said resilient member defines a central recess and further including a blanket removably secured within said recess.

10. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **9**, said pillow system further comprising a pocket retainer at least partially covering said central recess, further securing said blanket therein.

11. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **8** wherein said latching feature is a zipper.

12. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **8** wherein said latching feature is a hook and loop fastener.

13. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **8** wherein said pillow is secured within said first half via a disengaging mechanical fastener.

14. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **13** wherein said disengaging mechanical fastener is selected from a group consisting of:

a. a hook and loop tape fastener,

b. buttons and respective buttonholes,

c. snaps,

d. hook and loops,

e. ribbons,

f. frog closures,

g. ribbon and eyelets, and

h. elastic and respective anchors.

15. A travel carrier having a first half and a second half, said first half and said second halves defining a hollow interior and are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge such that there is a pivot about said hinge for substantially three-hundred-sixty degrees, said first half in a pivoted reversed position securable to second half via said a latching feature;

a pillow removably secured in a portion of said hollow interior by a disengaging mechanical fastener defined by said first half; and

a resilient member forming a recess for receiving a blanket, said resilient member being secured in a portion of said hollow interior defined by said second half; and

a pocket retainer provided at least partially covering an exposed portion of said recess formed by said resilient member;

wherein said first half and said second half are attached one to the other on at least one side with a hinge such that said first half is separable from said second half and is pivotal about said hinge for substantially three-hundred-sixty degrees, said first half in its pivoted reversed position securable to said second half via said latching feature.

16. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said latching feature is a zipper.

17. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said latching feature is a hook and loop fastener.

18. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **15** further comprising a pair of back-pack straps affixed to an exterior of said travel carrier to facilitate convenient carrying of pillow system.

19. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **1** wherein said pillow is secured within said first half via a disengaging mechanical fastener.

20. A portable compact pillow system as recited in claim **6** wherein said disengaging mechanical fastener is selected from a group consisting of:

a. a hook and loop tape fastener,

b. buttons and respective buttonholes,

c. snaps,

d. hook and loops,

e. ribbons,

f. frog closures,

g. ribbon and eyelets, and

h. elastic and respective anchors.

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